

REMARKS

Entry of the present amendment and reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 1, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 20 and 21 have been amended and the amendments do not add new matter.

Claims 4, 5, 15, 17, 18 and 42-68 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

Claims 23-41 have been allowed.

Claims 1-3, 6-14, 16, and 19-41 are pending in the application.

II. Acknowledgment of Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the acknowledgment of allowable subject matter in claims 5, 9-12, 18 and 20-22. Applicants have amended the claims to contain the allowable subject matter. Further, Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claims 23-41.

III. Election/Restriction

Applicants acknowledge the election of Group I, claims 1-41. Applicants have canceled claims 42-68 as directed to a non-elected invention.

IV. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3, 7, 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2001/0034152 to Kumasaka.

Claims 1, 7, 8, 13 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Publication 2002-163845 to Masafumi.

Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 13, 14 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Publication 2001-202663 to Shin et al. ("Shin").

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 5, including the intervening claims. Thus, claim 1 is allowable over the prior art of record. Claims 2, 17 and 8 depend from claim 1 and are allowable based at least on the dependency to claim 1. Claim 13 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 18, including the intervening claims. Thus, claim 13 is allowable over the prior art of record. Claims 14 and 19 depend from claim 13 and are allowable based at least on the dependency to claim 13.

V. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 4, 6, and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kumasaka in view of U.S. Publication No. 2001/0028456 to Nishi.

Claims 4, 6, and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masafumi in view of Nishi.

Claims 4, 6, and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shin in view of Nishi.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Claims 4, 15 and 17 have been canceled, rendering the rejection moot. Claims 6 and 16 depend from claims 1 and 13, respectively, and are allowable based at least on their dependency to the independent claims.

Applicants respectfully request the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance. In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below once he has reviewed the proposed amendment if the Examiner believes any issue can be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,

By

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